



The Division of Disability and Elder Services

Telework Policy and Procedures

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I. Introduction

The Division of Disability and Elder Services (DDES) recognizes the changing nature of its workforce and has begun to focus on ways to increase productivity while improving the quality of employee work life and morale. Telework is an important and attractive work option with benefits for employees and employers. This policy outlines the telework procedures.

II. Telework Definition

Telework - A work arrangement for employees to perform all or some of their work at an alternate worksite away from their primary office location.

III. Benefits

The use of a telework arrangement can assist management and employees by economically and effectively accomplishing the mission of the Department in the following ways:

- Enhance program effectiveness;
- Increase employee job performance;
- Increase job satisfaction;
- Promote employee health, wellness, and safety;
- Improve employee recruitment and retention;
- Environmental conservation (improved air quality, reduced demand on transportation system, and reduced highway congestion);
- Reduce travel expenses; and
- Accommodate additional employment resources that might not otherwise be accessible.

IV. Goals

The goal of this policy is to provide an inclusive, equitable, and useful employment teleworking policy for managers, employees, and customers. This policy incorporates the advances available in technology as well as the attitudes and practicalities of the modern workplace. DDES strives to increase flexibility in the work environment, encourage individual initiative, and maximize the potential of the employee, the section, the Bureau, the Division, and the entire agency. DDES believes teleworking to be a fact of life in the mindset of the 21st-century work environment.

Our goals are:

A. *Improve recruitment and retention of employees*

There is a need and a responsibility to incorporate non-traditional workers into the workforce to comply with federal and state laws, retain and promote diversity, and effectively plan for succession as the current workforce ages. Achieving this goal would improve program effectiveness through use of existing talent and skills and result in increased new employee talent from wider access to labor markets. It may attract additional candidates to traditionally hard-to-fill positions.

B. *Improve the quality of work and life for employees*

Expanded flexibility would allow employees to shape and engineer their workday and, in doing so, increase levels of employee satisfaction, morale, and flexibility.

C. *Provide effective, efficient, and accountable services*

Teleworking makes better use of employee time. Customer service is an important goal of the Department and will continue at a high level when the service is provided by a teleworking employee.

D. *Achieve cost effectiveness for the Department*

Telework has the potential for increased employee retention. Telework should reduce absenteeism, stress, and time lost due to commuting. It may reduce recruitment and travel costs. Additional savings may result through reduced office space needs and training costs from reduced attrition.

V. Types of Telework Arrangements

- A. ***Full-time:*** The employee completes all or almost all duties at an alternate worksite, occasionally coming to the office for a meeting or as required by the supervisor.
- B. ***Part-time:*** The employee teleworks on a regularly scheduled basis. This may be one or more days a week, several days a month, or several hours a day/week.
- C. ***Episodic or Situational:*** The employee teleworks on an irregular basis, working from home during an illness or injury or for a specific assignment.

VI. Eligibility

Participation in telework is voluntary for current employees in various classifications and subject to the prior written approval by an employee's supervisor. Current employees will not be required to telework and supervisors are not required to allow an employee to telework. For the Bureau of Quality Assurance (BQA), certain job classifications are required to telework. The Division will encourage voluntary participation in telework where appropriate and will give fair consideration to all employees in identified classifications.

VII. Care of Dependents and Others

Telework arrangements are not intended to assist in meeting child or other dependent care needs. While teleworking, the teleworker is not to provide any supervision to children, to sick or incapacitated persons, or to any other persons who may require attention or assistance.

VIII. Job Considerations

Use the following considerations to assess whether a particular job is suitable for telework:

- A. Specific work activities are portable and can be performed effectively outside the office.

- B. Specific work activities involve responsibilities that routinely occur in the field.
- C. Degree to which the work can be sent to and from the employee's alternate worksite with ease, speed and confidentiality.
- D. The need for face-to-face contact with managers, colleagues, or others in the workplace is minimal.
- E. Access to equipment, materials, files etc., available only at the workplace is not required.
- F. Telework situation complies with security and data confidentiality requirements.
- G. Access to Internet and remote access capability is adequate in the telework environment.
- H. The job functions of the teleworker may be performed independently, with minimal dependence on support staff and supervision.

IX. Characteristics of Successful Teleworkers

Employees who would be considered candidates to telework generally have a number of work-related characteristics in common. Some of these include the following:

- A. Demonstrated proven performer in current position as evidenced by satisfactory or better performance reviews.
- B. Self-motivated and responsible employee.
- C. Approach to work is focused on results/outcomes.
- D. Works independently and possesses decision-making capabilities.
- E. Does not need continual social interaction or close supervision.
- F. Familiar and comfortable with their job requirements.
- G. Knowledgeable about the organization's procedures.
- H. Able to establish priorities and manage work time effectively and efficiently.
- I. Effective communicator with team and supervisor.
- J. Adaptable in meeting agency demands.
- K. Committed to making telework successful.
- L. Demonstrates a cooperative and positive attitude with supervisors, co-workers and customers.

X. Characteristics of Successful Supervisors of Teleworkers

The characteristics of the supervisor are important to the success of the telework arrangement. Supervisors need to meet the following criteria:

- A. Have an open and positive attitude toward telework.
- B. Take the necessary steps to ensure its success.
- C. Establish clear expectations and measurable performance objectives for all employees.

- D. Communicate well with all employees.
- E. Provide a system for timely and constructive feedback.
- F. Apply a flexible management style and approach.
- G. Use employee input in generating solutions.
- H. Trust the teleworker to perform duties when not in direct contact with the supervisor.
- I. Monitor employee performance adequately to ensure effective and efficient job performance.

XI. Participation Approval Process

Requests for teleworking will be considered on an individual basis to determine if the employee has the necessary skills and abilities to telework, and if the duties of the employee's position can be adequately performed by teleworking. The process to apply for participation is as follows:

- A. The employee completes the [Telework Application](#) and the [Telework Safety and Ergonomic Checklist](#), and submits these forms to his/her supervisor.
- B. The supervisor reviews the submitted materials and discusses them with the employee, taking into account various telework issues that may affect the employee and the employer.
- C. The supervisor completes the Supervisor Review portion by either approving or denying the application, and discusses the decision with the employee.
- D. If the Telework Application is approved, the employee completes the [Telework Agreement](#) and discusses the agreement and any areas of concern with his/her supervisor. Both parties sign this form, with the supervisor and employee keeping copies of all signed forms.
- E. The Bureau submits the employee names, classifications, headquarters city, and alternate worksite of all Bureau-level approved telework staff to the Division's Office of Operations Director, the Division's Security Officer for non-BQA telework staff, and to the BQA Security Officer for BQA telework staff.
- F. The teleworker completes any Bureau telework training, as appropriate.

XII. Termination or Suspension of Agreement

The telework arrangement is an employee privilege, not an employee right, and may be revoked at any time by the employer. The following is an example under which the employer may adjust a telework agreement. If an employee fails to meet any of the performance expectations for a quarter, the employer reserves the right to adjust the work at home schedule to work with the employee on performance concerns. A supervisor's changes may include reduction in hours at home, suspension of privileges, or termination of privileges. Return to full privileges may occur when performance problems are satisfactorily corrected at the supervisor's discretion.

The employer may also inspect the alternate worksite during the teleworker's normal working hours to ensure proper maintenance of Department-issued property and conformance with safety standards during a scheduled meeting with the teleworker, as necessary. The employer may inspect the alternate worksite, without notice, if there is cause to believe a DHFS policy violation may be occurring, or for any reason related to concerns about a possible work rule violation or to job performance.

- A. For BQA teleworkers, the employer may terminate the telework agreement with 14 calendar days notice.
- B. For non-BQA teleworkers, the employer or employee may terminate the telework agreement by mutual acceptance.
- C. The employer may terminate any telework agreement with a minimum of 24 hours notice if the terms of the agreement or this policy are reasonably believed to be violated.

XIII. Telework Scheduling

- A. The employee and supervisor must establish a mutually agreeable telework schedule of hours or days prior to the start of the work arrangement. If an employee is entitled to evening, night, or weekend differentials per his/her labor union contract, these evening, night, or weekend hours cannot be part of the regular scheduled hours of the telework agreement. The employee's supervisor must approve any change in the agreed upon schedule.
- B. The employee may be required to report to the DDES office location. The supervisor reserves the right to alter the teleworker's schedule of work, including the denial of the teleworker's right to work at the alternate worksite during any work week if the teleworker's supervisor believes such action is required to meet operational needs. While working away from the office, employees must be accessible for communication with co-workers, supervisors and customers regarding job-related matters (e.g., telephone, pager, e-mail, etc.).
- C. To make telework successful, supervisors and staff need to be proactive and work together to identify how current procedures and job functions will be affected by telework and, if necessary, make changes to how work is accomplished when staff are working from their home and take advantage of technology available to assist in completing job tasks efficiently.

XIV. Responsibilities and Requirements

A. *Teleworkers must:*

- 1. Abide by all DHFS work rules and agency standards of conduct while working at the alternate worksite.
- 2. Use State-issued resources for authorized purposes only.

3. Ensure the alternate worksite provides a secure and confidential work and storage area for office materials, and State-issued equipment adheres to all applicable laws, rules, regulations, policies, and procedures regarding equipment and information security. All teleworkers must review, understand and follow the policies, procedures and guidelines found on the Department's Security Awareness WorkWeb at <http://dhfswweb/security/index.htm>.
4. Adhere to DHFS IT policies. These policies can be found at the following DHFS WorkWeb site: <http://dhfswweb/it/Policies/Policy&Standards/ITPolicy.htm#Policies>
5. Contact their supervisor and IT representative immediately in the event of equipment malfunction. The supervisor may require the teleworker to report to the main office if equipment malfunction significantly interferes with his/her productivity at the alternate worksite.
6. Work with his/her supervisor to develop a mutually agreeable work schedule and communicate any changes in this schedule to the supervisor in a timely manner.
7. Take the appropriate leave time to accommodate personal business, illness, etc., and obtain approval from their supervisor of this leave time.
8. Notify his/her supervisor of any changes to the address of the alternate worksite, as the new worksite must be reviewed for approval under a new telework agreement.
9. Agree the Division may provide the telephone number of the alternate worksite to individuals who desire to speak with them regarding official work duties/responsibilities.
10. Acquire the skills necessary to effectively and independently operate from an alternate worksite.
11. Effectively communicate with supervisors and peers to ensure work productivity is maintained in the telework arrangement.
12. Not conduct face-to-face business at the teleworker's home base.
13. Conform to the travel expense reimbursement provisions of ss. [16.53 \(12\)](#) and [20.916](#), Wis. Stats., appropriate administrative policies and procedures, and union contract provisions.
14. Understand the teleworker is covered by Workers' Compensation if injured in the course of performing official duties at the telework location. Employees must notify their supervisor immediately and complete all necessary documents regarding all work-related accidents.

B. *Supervisors/Employers must:*

1. Review telework applications to determine if proposals for their employees to telework are likely to contribute to DHFS's objectives, while maintaining or improving program efficiency, productivity, service, and benefits.
2. Ensure bargaining union language is followed in implementation of a telework agreement.

3. Ensure teleworkers are adhering to agreed-upon work schedules.
4. Provide specific, measurable, and attainable performance expectations for the teleworker; define assignments, corresponding deadlines, the quality of work expected, and monitor work performance.
5. Ensure telework does not burden staff remaining in the office through inequitable distribution of workload.
6. Ensure the teleworker is trained to use equipment and software as required for the employee to function effectively and independently, including policies, procedures and guidelines regarding equipment and information security. All supervisors must review and understand the policies, procedures and guidelines found on the Department's Security Awareness WorkWeb at <http://dhfswweb/security/index.htm>.

XV. Setting Up a Telework Office

A. Health and Safety

It is important for all employees to maintain a healthy, safe and ergonomically sound work environment while working in the office or at an alternate worksite. The major difference between the employer's office and a home office is ownership and control over the workplace.

A safety and ergonomic self-certification of the alternate worksite will be completed by the employee and reviewed by the supervisor. Self-certification is done by completing the [Safety Checklist and the Ergonomic Checklist](#) prior to supervisor approval to telework. As an additional resource, employees may also want to review an online self-paced ergonomics course available via the Internet at <http://www.doa.state.wi.us/ergonomics/login.asp>.

DHFS employees or agents may make on-site visits at the teleworker's alternate worksite for the purpose of conferring with the employee, and/or maintaining, repairing, inspecting, and/or retrieving DHFS equipment, materials, software, supplies, data, records and/or documents. In the event legal action is necessary to regain possession of DHFS equipment, materials, software, supplies, data, records and/or documents, the teleworker will be responsible to pay the legal costs incurred by DHFS, including attorney's fees, should DHFS prevail.

B. Equipment and Materials

The Department/Division will determine equipment needs. DHFS will provide teleworkers the equipment and software required to perform their assigned work duties at the employee's main worksite such as computers (desktops/laptops), software, software licenses, Internet or phone services, and office equipment such as printers, fax machines, calculators, or furniture. As a standard, DHFS will not purchase or furnish duplicative equipment or materials for employees.

Employees should discuss office furniture needs with their supervisor. Supervisors are responsible for approving, obtaining, and distributing all personally assigned, State-issued property to their employees.

The DHFS [Information Technology \(IT\) Access Property Assignment and Release DMT-872](#) must be completed to identify all State-issued property and equipment used for teleworking. All appropriate property and equipment shall be returned at the time the telework arrangement is terminated.

Access to the DHFS network can only be done via a State-issued computer (desktop/laptop). However, checking business emails does not require connection to the DHFS network, and does not require a State-issued computer/laptop.

In the event an employee's main worksite is defined as the DDES office location, and an employee does telework for a portion of the time, a reasonable attempt to provide a State-issued computer will be made. Conversely, if an employee's main worksite is defined as an alternate worksite, and the employee is scheduled to be in the office location for a portion of the time, a reasonable attempt to provide a State-issued computer (desktop/laptop), or some other surplus or pooled computer (desktop/laptop) will be made.

DHFS retains sole discretion with respect to decisions related to the type, nature, function and/or quality of electronic hardware, computer software, data and telecommunications equipment made available for teleworker use. Teleworkers should adhere to DHFS IT policies regarding State-issued equipment. Computer equipment should have a configuration compatible with DHFS's Information Technology (IT) infrastructure and standards. At least monthly, teleworkers are required to bring State-issued equipment (laptop computers) to a DDES office for updates.

Access to and use of equipment, software, data, supplies, materials, records, and documents provided by DHFS for employee use at the alternate worksite shall be limited to DHFS employees for appropriate DHFS business purposes.

Any selection, installation, maintenance, repair, or replacement of employee-owned equipment and software is the responsibility of the employee.

C. IT Setup

For non-BQA staff, the Division's Security Officer (for BQA staff, the BQA IT support person) will contact the teleworker to arrange a time to install the Citrix client for dial-up users and the VPN client for Broadband users, as appropriate. Internet Service Provider (ISP) software should not be installed on State-issued laptops. The employee should review the documentation on the DDES Telework WorkWeb for remote access instructions.

The decision of whether to use Broadband (DSL or Cable) or dial-up needs to be determined based on the teleworker's responsibilities, access to various applications, as well as the availability of services at the alternate worksite. Decisions need to be consistent within each business area and should be based on a case-by-case basis ensuring telework issues are addressed regarding cost, applications needed, value added to the organization, full-time versus part-time teleworking, etc.

BIS Telecommunication Staff will contact dial-up users to schedule a time for the installation of a phone line in their home if one is needed.

If telework employees are eligible for reimbursement for Broadband or dial-up services (either fully or in part), the employee may request reimbursement for the cost of the service by submitting the [State Employee Travel Reimbursement Request DMT-190A](#) and attaching the monthly statement from the service provider. The supervisor should review the submitted reimbursement request to ensure no more than the established rate is reimbursed.

The cost of routers will not be reimbursed if the State is reimbursing the employee for a monthly Broadband cost. If the employee chooses to use the Broadband service to connect to their own computer for personal use, DHFS recommends the employee purchase a router to eliminate technical problems in transitioning the Broadband service between the State-issued laptop and the employee's personal computer.

D. *Additional Hardware*

1. Printers – For those who request a printer for their telework site, either a portable printer or a desktop printer/scanner may be purchased for them. No personal printers (printers not provided by DDES) will be supported by DDES, nor should ink cartridges be purchased by DDES for them.
2. Shredders – Shredders will not be provided for the home offices. Staff should take the necessary precautions to protect documents containing confidential or sensitive information. Copies of confidential documents can be hand shredded or brought to the Central/Regional Office for shredding. For BQA, original survey documents must be maintained in the Regional Office files or Central Office Record Center depending on the provider type. Other DDES business areas need to formulate a policy on the storage location of original documents and communicate the policy to the teleworker.
3. Fax machines – Because DHFS staff will be getting a fax option with the upgrade to Outlook (will replace GroupWise) scheduled to occur in 2006, DDES is not currently planning to purchase fax machines.

E. *Equipment and Information Security*

Security of equipment and confidential information is of primary concern and importance to DHFS. Teleworkers, like all State employees, are expected to adhere to all applicable laws, rules, regulations, policies, and procedures regarding equipment and information security. The following are basic equipment and information security guidelines that teleworkers should follow:

1. Review their work space on an ongoing basis to ensure secure practices for their equipment and information. All teleworkers must review, understand and follow the policies, procedures and guidelines found on the Department's Security Awareness WorkWeb at <http://dhfsweb/security/index.htm>.

2. Secure and lock equipment, as appropriate, such as laptop computers, cell phones, peripheral drives or media (e.g., jump drives, thumb drives, etc.), personal digital assistants (PDAs), etc., and be familiar with and follow [laptop theft safeguards](#).
3. Use appropriate wireless security, e.g., WPA, if using a wireless network.
4. Do not transfer or save any confidential or sensitive information on employee-owned equipment.
5. Use DHFS information assets only for authorized purposes, and ensure confidential information is not disclosed to any unauthorized person.
6. Back up critical information on a regular basis to assure recovery of the information in the event the primary source is damaged or destroyed. Secure and lock any peripheral equipment or media used to back up the information.
7. Use "logon" passwords on all State-issued computers, as well as any systems containing confidential information, and keep those passwords secure.
8. Use the latest virus protection software and keep it up-to-date on telework systems used to prepare information for subsequent use on DHFS systems.
9. Return material (paper documents, diskettes, etc.) containing any confidential or sensitive information to DHFS for proper handling or disposal, if necessary.
10. Adhere to copyright laws by not copying or sharing any DHFS-owned software.
11. Notify the Division's Security Officer, or the Bureau of Quality Assurance (BQA) Security Officer for a BQA teleworker, if the technology used by the teleworker changes, to ensure secure practices are being met, e.g., going from a wired to a wireless environment, dial-up to Broadband, etc.

XVI. Worker's Compensation, Liability, Property Damage

A teleworker is eligible for Worker's Compensation benefits under Wisconsin Statutes, Chapter 102, while performing service connected to and incidental to employment at their alternate worksite.

A teleworker is subject to the limitations on liability for acts growing out of or committed in the course of the discharge of their duties at the alternate worksite under Wisconsin Statutes, Section 893.82. The teleworker is also eligible for legal defense and payment of judgments, under Wisconsin Statutes section 895.46, which may be required because of acts committed while carrying out duties as an employee within the scope of employment for DHFS at the alternate worksite. Employees must notify their supervisor immediately and complete all necessary documents regarding all work-related accidents.

DHFS property and equipment used and maintained at the alternate worksite shall be covered by the State's self-insurance coverage in the same manner as if the property was located in a State of Wisconsin office facility. The State's self insurance does not provide coverage for employee's personal property or residence. DHFS recommends the teleworker maintain his/her own property coverage (homeowner's or rental property) through his/her own property insurance company. The employer will not be liable for damages to the teleworker's property resulting from participation in the telework program.

(In signing a telework agreement, the employee agrees to hold the State harmless against any and all claims, excluding Workers' Compensation claims.)

XVII. Other Legal or Financial Issues

The identification or resolution of any federal, state, or local tax deductions and obligations shall be the sole responsibility of the teleworker; the Department will not provide advice or counsel on personal tax issues. Teleworkers should seek the advice of a qualified tax professional. Legal or financial matters outside the scope of Wisconsin Statutes, sections 893.82 and 895.46 arising from the use of a teleworker's residence or participation in the program, are the sole responsibility of the employee.

The employer will not be responsible for any operating costs associated with the teleworker using his/her home as an alternate worksite, for example, home maintenance, insurance, or utilities. The teleworker understands he/she does not relinquish any entitlement to reimbursement for authorized expenses incurred while conducting business for the Department, as provided for by State statute and regulations.

XVIII. Headquarters City and Travel Policies

Each business area needs to be consistent in designating the headquarters city for a teleworker. It may be the nearest regional or central office, or it may be the alternate site (e.g., the employee's home). The decision needs to be based on whether the teleworker is in a full-time or part-time telework status, the responsibilities of the job, travel considerations, cost implications, etc.

The teleworker is responsible for adhering to all Department of Administration (DOA) travel policies and procedures.

Car rentals from teleworker's home - Enterprise cars are treated as though they are "State owned" because they are obtained for the purpose of conducting State business. Every attempt shall be made not to put personal miles on these vehicles. Since they may be maintained at someone's home, this may be unavoidable, so personal miles put on the vehicle must be paid for at the same rate as the personal miles put on actual "State-owned" vehicles.

A. Home as Headquarters City

If an employee's home is his/her designated headquarters, all miles would be considered business miles. If an employee has a personally assigned State-owned vehicle, the employee needs to check both boxes, "Personal" and "Home Based" on the Vehicle Assignment Transfer (VUA) form.

Note: The DHFS Secretary's Office must approve VUAs for "Personal" and "Home-Based" assignments.

B. Regional or Central Office as Headquarters City

DOA does not consider the employee's alternate worksite to be a temporary worksite. Just because a teleworker is conducting some of his/her work from an alternate worksite does not change it to a temporary worksite.

As long as the employee's headquarters is a State office building, the following would apply according to an October 25, 2005, interpretation by DOA of the [State of WI Compensation Plan](#) rules:

1. Section F-3.05(3)6 specifically states mileage between an employee's home and the assigned headquarters is not reimbursable. Therefore, the more specific provision would apply, and the employee could not be reimbursed for mileage from home to his/her headquarters. Also the State statutes state mileage between the employee's home and headquarters is not reimbursable.
2. Section F-3.05(3)2 indicates mileage between temporary worksites is reimbursable. However, section F-3.05(3)3 specifically states that for trips starting or ending at an employee's home, the lesser of the actual mileage driven between the home and the worksite, or the mileage between the assigned headquarters and the worksite are the reimbursable miles (lesser of two distances rule).

Therefore, as long as the assigned headquarters is a State office building, the employee would not be eligible for reimbursement of all the miles driven from his/her home to a temporary worksite. Mileage between the employee's home and headquarters would not be reimbursable. Reimbursable mileage from his/her home to a temporary worksite (not designated as the employee's headquarters) would be determined by applying the "lesser of two distances" rule [F-3.05(3)3].